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AUTHOR Harada, Myra
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ABSTRACT

The impetus for the development of criteria for the evaluation of academic deans should come from an interest in improved administrative performance rather than from political motivations. Merging faculty expectations with the criteria identified in the literature results in four areas in which deans should be evaluated: (1) knowledge of laws and regulations, district policies, budgetary practices, college mission, curriculum, staff/faculty hiring and evaluation, collective bargaining, higher education developments, the college's mythic history, business and industry needs and expectations, and internal and external data affecting the college; (2) managerial skills, including the ability to achieve objectives, organizational and coordination skills, communication skills, good judgement, decisiveness, the ability to effect change, problem-solving skills, and interpersonal skills; (3) leadership skills, including creativity and innovativeness, goal-setting, quality assurance, the ability to anticipate and recognize change, good judgement, team building, and the ability to build morale and inspire confidence; and (4) attitudes and personal attributes that are compatible with faculty expectations, including valuing liberal as well as vocational education, being committed to excellence in teaching, being concerned with institutional well-being, appreciating racial and cultural diversity, being receptive and sensitive, being fair and trustworthy, being dependable and hardworking, and being ethical, honest and sincere. Evaluation is one way that an institution and its administrators can prepare for coming changes in an atmosphere of tolerance, inquiry, and innovation. (JMC)

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MYRA HARADA
3535 LARK STREET
SAN DIEGO, CA 92103
(619) 294-2392
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CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE

INSTRUCTIONAL DEANS

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CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE INSTRUCTIONAL DEANS

The faculty of community colleges rarely have the opportunity to participate in the formative evaluations of their administrators. Too often "evaluations" of administrative performance take place in times of crisis and are manipulated to register disapproval, a situation which produces opinion polls focused on a specific, recent event. Politically motivated evaluations serve a purpose at odds with the purpose of improved performance, which the evaluative criteria of the present discussion hope to serve.

Improved administrative performance at this community college is the rationale for the current interest in faculty evaluation of deans. The impetus for developing evaluative criteria first emerged from the academic senate, which is preparing to create a procedure for evaluation. The concept of administrative evaluation grew out of the spirit of California Assembly Bill 1725, which emphasizes "shared governance" between faculty and management, and out of a general concern for the monitoring of quality through evaluation and review. The faculty of this college are systematically reviewed for promotion, tenure, and, until a few months ago, merit pay. Since administrators also represent a crucial aspect of the business of the college, the senate sought administrative participation in a review process that included faculty perspective. Furthermore, the college master plan, completed in April 1991, offers specific objectives with measurable outcomes--a condition that lends itself more readily to appraisal than heretofore. The new college administrative reorganization plan connotes fresh tasks, new beginnings, and a new commitment to excellence that presupposes evaluation. Finally, the latest college accreditation report states: "The teaching and

support staff of the college do not have a voice in the evaluation of either their college or district administrators. . . .[The college should] develop an evaluation procedure for staff to evaluate administrators at college and district levels." It is apparent that the faculty are ready to take on the responsibility of assuring the institution an ongoing, formative evaluation process for administrative members of the academic community.

Aside from the specific motivational factors at this institution, there has been a current trend toward administrative appraisals. Limited resources and swiftly changing external pressures demand more effective management (Wattenbarger, 1983; Patton, 1987; Astin, 1991). With formal evaluation processes, the manager--or more specifically, the dean--can identify expectations, be informed of performance standards, and clarify training needs and areas for improvement. The dean will also develop greater responsibility for institutional goals and continuous quality performance. In addition, evaluations provide both the dean and his/her supervisor a justification for personnel action--assignments, promotions, and dismissals.

To determine what managerial criteria scholars and experienced administrators consider most important, I have selected literature from the 1970's and '80's. I have largely excluded literature from the particularly sanguine era of the '60's because the rapid growth experienced by colleges and universities at that time and the rise in available resources created an environment distinct from our present one, which is being shaped by reductions in enrollment, programs, and resources.

Such an environment and the nature of the educational institution--even chance--give a context in which the dean is judged. A fair and accurate evaluation involves contextual interpretation, a consideration of the unique

set of circumstances surrounding performance (Hoyt, 1982). The evaluative criteria I have selected addresses changing demands, the limitations imposed by the nature of this particular institution, and the expectations of the faculty.

Merging faculty expectations with the desirable characteristics proffered by scholars and educators (Dressel (1976); Wolotkiewicz, (1980); Hoyt, (1982); Smith, (1983); Hoshmand, (1988); Seldin, (1988a, 1988b); Tucker & Bryan, (1988); Ramirez, 1991), I have assembled four classes of criteria: knowledge, managerial skills, leadership skills, attitudes and personal attributes. "Knowledge" refers to specific information that the dean should have or have ready access to in order to carry out his/her duties legally, procedurally, and whenever feasible, inoffensively. Management and leadership skills are those abilities that bring about action. For our purposes, "management" defines those functions that promote and maintain the bureaucracy of administration. "Leadership" defines those skills that go beyond bureaucratic housekeeping; leadership creates goals and provides vision. "Attitudes" refers to worldview and values; "personal attributes" refers to character.

KNOWLEDGE. A major part of the dean's job is to work with the restrictions of policies, rules, regulations, and traditions that guide the college. In order to do so, he or she must be acquainted with the sources that provide this knowledge. The most important of these are:

The laws and regulations governing community colleges and higher education

The policies of the district and their history

District and state budgetary practices and their administration

The mission, principles, and purposes of the college

The creation and development of curriculum

Evaluation and hiring procedures for staff and faculty

The union contract and negotiation processes

The "saga" of the college

New developments and innovations in higher education

The needs and expectations of business, industry and the community which the college serves

Internal data about the college and external forces that affect programs and planning

No dean is expected to achieve specialized expertise in these areas, but he/she should continuously acquire a broad base of knowledge as part of the job so that a foundation is laid for crisis management, which may demand in-depth knowledge. I do not suggest that faculty evaluate the deans with regard to all the items on this list. It would probably be more appropriate for the president, peers, and department chairs to assess the dean's working knowledge of these areas than it would be for the faculty at large. In fact, one of the major criticisms of administrator evaluations is that faculty respondents may not have adequate knowledge with which to judge performance (Reid, 1982).

The dean should, however, peruse AB 1725 since the bill demands or implies many changes in governance, programs, and institutional emphases which will affect decisions for years. In addition, because of the recent creation of a new college master plan, the goals and objectives of the college should be kept firmly in mind. The final item in this list, internal and external

data, also has particular significance for the faculty at this college. Institutional research in the district is still in its initial stages because, until recent years, it had not been a priority. Although an admirable effort was made to compile data when the district master plan was being formulated three years ago, information in certain areas is incomplete and in others, non-existent. Since we are still in the process of creating a corpus of data, deans must take the initiative to request research studies, surveys, and data-base inquiries for planning purposes and to support faculty-initiated proposals. Additional knowledge of data-gathering techniques and developmnents in technological capabilities would aid the dean not only with the efficient running of the bureaucracy but also with effective program planning and curriculum development.

A word about the "saga" of the college: I believe that this aspect of academic culture has been too long ignored. The saga is an oral retelling of an institution's mythic history--stories of endurance and heroism that made the institution what it is today. By encouraging story-telling, the administrator can discover the key players and their roles, the real repositories of power, the special interest groups, and the history behind fears and prejudices. The knowledge about the institutional saga can can determine degrees of success or failure in almost every interaction in the campus community.

MANAGERIAL SKILLS. The skills that a dean should have can be divided into two categories, managerial skills and leadership skills. Leadership has commonly been defined as knowing where to go and management, knowing how to get there. Further defining these categories may be apt: the leader creates institutional planning goals and promotes the highest ideals of education; the

manager plans strategies and directs activities that support institutional goals. In addition to the implementation of objectives, the manager must be a good housekeeper, acting with timeliness to attend to the duties that maintain the institutional bureaucracy.

The dean should be evaluated on the following managerial skills:

Achievement of objectives. Produces results.

Organization and coordination skills. Plans for completion of activities for optimum effectiveness. Recognizes eventualities, establishes priorities, coordinates activities.

Communication skills. Conducts productive meetings, makes effective presentations orally and in writing, communicates unambiguously, facilitates communication within groups, and explains actions.

Good judgment. Demonstrates sound judgment based on a variety of information sources and weighs their objectivity, relevance, and importance. Considers several alternatives. Makes decisions that are contextually fair. Evaluates faculty and programs seriously and objectively. Anticipates the consequences of decisions. Acts upon decisions with timeliness. Understands that each decision influences and defines policy.

Decisiveness. Confronts problems and seeks resolution. Responds quickly to events. Takes charge in emergencies. Accepts responsibility for decisions.

Change. Identifies problems that require change and the level at which change should occur. Recognizes that change requires new ideas and their implementation. Accommodates the organizational stresses brought

on by change. Tolerates the uncertainty of outcomes and is resourceful in adapting to them. Demonstrates flexibility.

Problem-solving. Correctly identifies problems, their component parts, and their causes. Finds solutions with input from varied sources, thoughtful observation, and analysis. Makes sure that the solution has direct relevance to the problem. Effects solutions in a timely manner and monitors their success. Can handle several problems at once.

Interpersonal skills. Works well with people of varying backgrounds and temperaments. Understands the subtleties of interpersonal communication--written, spoken, and non-verbal. Obtains support and good work from others. Builds good relations with members of the community both on campus and off.

The achievement of objectives may be an area that is difficult to evaluate at this institution because of the newness of its master plan. In the past, "objectives" took the form of isolated bright ideas calculated (or so it sometimes appeared to the faculty) to showcase the administrator who came up with it. Faculty reactions to these ideas range from downright hostility to mild interest (usually when funding is good). In general, fully conceived projects for which faculty are recruited are not well-received unless re-assigned time is available. The relevance of the objective and not merely its attainment is of major concern to the faculty. Another obstacle to achievement of objectives is report-writing. Here, as elsewhere in academe, writing reports can become an end in itself, actually supplanting action. For many academics, the statement itself is action. (Astin, 1991).

Decisiveness is a skill that needs more exercise in academe. The culture ~~at this institution~~, indeed at many institutions, favors letting problems solve themselves, making cosmetic adjustments that might disguise them, or simply declaring that they don't exist. Real decision-making can be more damaging politically than the slow decay of the institution, for which it is difficult to assign blame. The avoidance of decisions is also aggravated by the glacial speed of educational bureaucracies. Programs designed to accommodate change can become obsolete before their implementation.

Change and the ability to adapt to it will characterize this institution for the next decade. This college has had two chancellors in the last three years and is experiencing mass retirement of its aging faculty. Several departments are witnessing ideological and cultural clashes between the old guard and the young Turks. The new faculty want to adjust things to their liking while the senior faculty insist that "It ain't broke, so don't fix it."

The demographic predictions for the next decade are a present reality at this college. Larger enrollments (29,000 in 1990), more women, more minorities (11% Asians, mostly immigrants), more need for financial aid, less academic preparedness of students--all of these were in evidence five years ago, but no campus-wide planning took place until last year.

Along with having to implement the new master plan and the ongoing process of planning, the faculty and the administration are adjusting to other demands of AB 1725 for shared governance, cultural diversity, matriculation procedures, basic skills emphasis, employee evaluation, affirmation action, and an adjunct-to-contract faculty ratio of 25:75.

In addition, there is the California State budget shortfall, which has forced us to cut classes by 3% in fall, 1991. These class cuts will come from

offerings beloved by faculty--honors and specialty courses which are a source of academic pride and professional growth on campus. Fewer class offerings at nearby universities and the rise in tuition at the University of California at San Diego will bring even larger numbers of students to our doors. These university students, who already account for over 4,000 students every fall semester, could impact our primary constituency in ways that may not be immediately apparent.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS. I have chosen to separate leadership from management skills in order to present the distinguishing characteristics of the leader. In this fashion, the dean might know what actions tend to maintain the well-oiled machine and what actions redesign the machine for better productivity.

These are the characteristics of a leader:

Creativity and innovation. Devises new ways to improve functions and achieve goals. Encourages creativity and innovation.

Goal-setting. Creates goals that focus on excellence. Provides direction, not merely implementation. Identifies critical issues.

Quality. Establishes standards of performance and results. Encourages and rewards good teaching and professional development.

Change. Anticipates and recognizes change, seizing it opportunistically. Is invigorated by it.

Good judgment. Considers means vs. ends. Decides on discretionary issues. Is a good judge of character.

Cooperation. Fosters cooperation (to be distinguished from coordination). Is a team builder.

Builds morale. Shows respect and appreciation for faculty and staff. Displays enthusiasm for campus goals and activities.

Inspires confidence. Is optimistic.

A good leader is qualitatively different from a good manager. The good manager reacts and responds to situations well while the good leader creates situations favorable to action.

While "innovation" has long been a byword in the literature of education, true interest in new ideas, methods, and procedures has been difficult to generate at this institution. The reasons are varied: many of the faculty are only a few years from retirement; no systematic, formative program reviews have been conducted; strategic planning is a foreigner washed ashore by AB 1725; and budgetary participation has been limited. It is apparent in this setting that operations have not centered around goal-setting nor is there a coherent program of quality control. The district initiated an elaborate faculty evaluation process to accommodate a negotiated payroll schedule dependent on promotion. This process may eventuate standards of teaching and administrative performance, but so far its immediate effects are to present deans with a task that overshadows all others and to advise instructors to enhance their dossiers.

Faculty promotions and evaluations represent part of the tide of change which is inundating this campus. The new faculty members are a different academic generation from the faculty who have been here for twenty years or more. Many of the long-tenured faculty have come from an academic background in secondary education with teaching experience in high schools. They have preferred to be left alone to do their work with a minimum of interference

from their deans, whose job, they believe, is to "take care of the paperwork." The faculty who have been hired in the last few years are more often products of research universities, several of whom have Ph. D.'s; have never taught in secondary schools; and are generally more interested in their disciplines than in teaching methods. They, too, prefer no interference from their deans, but they are more demanding of facilitating assistance from their deans in projects and curriculum changes. The different training of these two groups, the clash of academic orientations, and the gap in hiring generations have already proved challenging to the instructional deans.

ATTITUDES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES. Despite the difficulty of reforming them, the attitudes and personal attributes of a dean will probably be his/her best indicators for success in the years of change. The faculty at this community college would find a dean with following characteristics compatible with their expectations.

> Values liberal education as well as vocational training. Appreciates the western traditions in education and understands the demands of the workplace. Has intellectual and cultural interests.
>
> Is committed to excellence in teaching and professional growth. True commitment encourages, plans for, and rewards these accomplishments.
>
> Has concern for the well-being of the institution.
>
> Appreciates racial and cultural diversity. Goes beyond mere fulfillment of affirmative action stipulations. Sensitively integrates cultural diversity into the curriculum and the intellectual life of the campus.
>
> Is receptive. Is approachable. Accepts criticism, suggestions, advice, and new ideas from all areas and levels. Has a sense of humor.

Fair and trustworthy. Operates on principle and not by personalities. Approaches problems objectively and rationally. Makes no deals; incurs no compromising obligations. Keeps his/her word.

Dependable and hard-working. Can be relied upon to meet deadlines, get results, and shoulder his/her share of the workload.

Honest and sincere. Does not distort or omit information. Believes in what he/she does.

Sensitive to others. Has genuine respect and consideration for people, for which good manners cannot substitute.

Ethical. Understands ethical considerations, not merely the legal and illegal, correct and incorrect.

Self-evaluative. Continuously strives to know him/herself. Is self-critical and self-renewing.

Although everyone is committed to "excellence" in teaching and professional growth, it has become a word that has no meaning but arouses positive feelings. The dean should be able to define excellence -- distinguishing between excellence and maintenance, between competence and effort.

In addition, although all educators appreciate diverse races and cultures, a dean who is sincerely interested in diversity will understand that his/her job only begins with hiring affirmatively. The real work involves accommodating and appreciating cultural behaviors that could be initially puzzling or even offensive. Respecting other values and worldviews (the Western rational, causal, and linear vs. the non-rational, holistic, and

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circular, for example) will prove a difficult challenge. The demands of cultural diversity extend far beyond ethnic foods and folk dancing.

Because of widely differing viewpoints on politics, society, and economics that will threaten traditional modes of thought, the next decade promises conflict and change (Michael, 1985). Differences in demography will produce different needs and desires for groups polarized by age, education, values, life-styles, and sophistication. The administrative leader will have to chart a course despite the number of contradictory but defensible rationales that will roil the waters.

Evaluation is one way the institution and its administrators can prepare for this eventuality. Evaluation encourages an atmosphere of tolerance, inquiry, and innovation in the institutional environment; talents can be developed and channeled; and managers will have to become leaders (Astin, 1991).

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